

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, we are now on the floor considering the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill. This is an extremely important measure to everyone here and to the country, with important investments in our roads, bridges, highways, airports, housing, and infrastructure across the country. My ranking member, Senator BOND, and I are here ready to go and ready to work. We are waiting for our colleagues to come to the floor to offer their amendments, and I encourage them to do so.

The majority leader has asked us to move this bill as expeditiously as possible. We need to finish all of our appropriations bills by October 1 of this year in order to make sure people have the funding they need and so they know where we are going.

So we again ask our colleagues to come to the floor, and if they do have amendments, offer them, or if they do not, allow us to continue to finish this bill.

If there are no Members here seeking recognition at this point, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I ask the Senator to withhold the suggestion of an absence of a quorum.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I withhold.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I add to what the Chair, Senator MURRAY, has said. We are open. We are ready to do business. We have, I believe, close to two dozen amendments that have been filed. This would be an ideal time for people to come in and discuss their amendments, to bring them up. We are scheduled, I believe, to have votes on pending HUD amendments on Monday afternoon when we return, and it would be good for people, without time constraints, to come in and explain why they wish to amend the bill, and to allow us to debate those amendments and be ready for votes.

But we know there is interest. We know amendments have been filed, and we will have at least this morning to consider those amendments. I assume the majority leader will bring us in Monday afternoon. So I urge my colleagues, if you have an amendment to be seriously considered, whether it is on this side or the majority side, please bring it forward and let us have an opportunity to look at it, review it, debate it, discuss it, and prepare it for a vote.

With that, Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BEGICH). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICA'S WAR ON TERROR

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, today marks the eighth anniversary of America's war on terror—the day we began to fight back. But 9/11 was not the day the war began. Radical Islamic terrorists were at war with the United States long before that harrowing morning 8 years ago. That is crucial to remember now as the terror and tragedy of that day recedes into the past.

This war did not begin with the 9/11 attacks or when we sent troops to Afghanistan and it will not end when we defeat terrorists on any battlefield. Our goal cannot be merely to end one war but to win the war on terror. We will not win by trying to appease the grievances of our enemies. They do not hate our policies—they hate us, our freedoms, and our way of life.

The 3,000 on 9/11 were the consequence of a broad bipartisan failure of American leadership to understand that hate. The consequences of forgetting now will be far worse. Our enemies' strategy is based on what they see as our short memory. As the terrifying images of 9/11 fade, our enemies believe we will lose our nerve and retreat back into the false sense of security they exploited with those four jetliners on 9/11.

We cannot let that happen. If we lose our resolve and surrender our vigilance, the next attack might not be in airplanes but something far more devastating and lethal. Their plan depends on us forgetting, and so our challenge is to never forget.

We have sacrificed in blood and treasure. Thousands of families have lost what can never be replaced. From the men of Flight 93 to the mountains of Afghanistan to the sands of Iraq, heroes have fallen. Today we mourn their loss, honor their memory, and recommit to finish the work they began, not just in foreign theaters of war but here at home. The challenge of 9/11 is not just to win a war but to prevent the next one. We will do that by remem-

bering that our enemies are still hating and still planning. We must never forget.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator is recognized.

AMERICAN CHALLENGES

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, there are a lot of things happening in the United States and the world today. There are many issues and challenges we face. Obviously, the issue of health care reform has dominated the news and our attention. We had a somewhat interesting joint session of Congress the night before last.

But there are also other issues facing the Congress and the Nation. One of them, of course, is our strategy in Afghanistan. My colleagues have been discussing and debating that, and we will, as has the President, continue to debate and discuss as the President makes some very tough decisions concerning Afghanistan.

I have the greatest respect and regard for my colleague and friend, the distinguished chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. He and I are in agreement on many issues. It is very clear that Senator LEVIN wants a larger Afghan National Army. I have long maintained we need a larger Afghan Army. But I believe it is a false choice to try to grow the Afghan National Army while holding back on any additional U.S. combat troops.

I remind my colleagues that the lesson of Iraq, and the one General McChrystal wants to put into place in Afghanistan, is we do not get very far merely by putting individuals through a training course and releasing them into combat. As a matter of fact, when we examine the history, the very unhappy history of our engagement and involvement in Iraq, there was a time when the Iraqi Army was built up to a very large size—as I recall, around a couple hundred thousand—and then it basically collapsed, totally collapsed in the face of attacks from both Shia and Sunni extremists.

I think the buildup of the Afghan Army is an important component but remember, the lesson of Iraq was that our troops went out and fought and lived and spent 24/7 with the Iraqi military and gradually, over time, they became a far more capable fighting force and one of which all of us can be proud. It is mentorship at every level, including partnership in joint operations with U.S. forces, that will build a robust and capable Afghan military and pave the way for our eventual successful exit from Afghanistan. To do this

we need more U.S. combat troops in Afghanistan.

There is a lot more I would like to say about it, but there are vital areas that are controlled by the Taliban and its allies today. It will require U.S. military force to shape, clear, hold, and build in those areas. If we await the day when the Afghan National Army is increased in size and is capable of carrying out all these operations fully on its own, it may well be too late. We are reaching a decisive moment in Afghan history and our own. I believe the United States must commit the decisive force levels to bring about a significant change in the security environment in Afghanistan with the aim of seeing real change over the next 12 to 18 months.

This issue will continue to be an issue of mounting concern and importance to the American people. But I also want to point out, in the face of mounting reports of fraud and abuse carried out during the recent Afghan Presidential elections, I have real concerns about the integrity of the electoral process there. Yesterday, the Electoral Complaints Commission, a body backed by the United Nations, threw out votes from 83 polling stations across three provinces due to fraud. It also ordered recounts at hundreds of other polling stations and is due to examine irregularities in other areas of the country. These and other serious allegations of fraud undermine the perceived legitimacy of this election. I believe that perception is key to Afghan's political future. I believe we must urge the Electoral Complaints Commission to complete its work as soon as possible and to present a full report with its assessment of the fairness of the election in its entirety.

The Afghan people desire and deserve a fair electoral process and a leader who is elected legitimately. This election must be breakthrough for Afghanistan in terms of better governance, more competence, and less corruption. They have suffered from poor governance for far too long. We should desire no less and take the necessary steps to ensure that the government we are backing in Kabul is legitimate and has the support of the Afghan people and the international community.

I recall when it was fraud and an unfair election in Ukraine and the United States of America lent its weight and support of the then Orange Revolution and a free and fair election was held. We will wait until the electoral commissions issue their findings, but I am very concerned already about the information that we have concerning significant voter fraud. That may have called for a runoff election between President Karzai and his leading opponent, Abdullah Abdullah.

While all Americans take occasion today to commemorate the terrible attacks of 2001, each of us also has cause to reflect on some of the lessons our Nation learned in the wake of 9/11. Its often hard to think clearly about the

days before those attacks, when the world seemed at once a safer and more distant place, and our country a superpower in a secure neighborhood. We saw before 9/11 that America had interests across the globe, and we believed that our actions must be motivated by the ideals that have made us great. Yet we also often assumed—wrongly—that the volatility that spilled across distant shores would never wash over ours; that instability and repression in remote and obscure places was cause for tragedy but not for alarm.

We have learned a lot since that day. We have learned that history is often made in the very remote and obscure places that draw so little of our attention. We have learned that the degree of freedom and stability in other countries is connected to the security we enjoy at home. And we have learned that we must remain the authors of history, or face becoming its victims.

Today I would like to spend just a few moments discussing recent events in one of those places which, I would bet, seems like a peripheral concern to most Americans. Few of us wake up in the morning scouring the papers for the latest news from Lebanon, or follow the ins and outs of politics in Beirut. Yet in recent days we, have seen the portents of new political crisis in Lebanon and, while all of us must hope that it will be resolved easily and peacefully, we know from the history of that country that it very well may not be.

Yesterday, Prime Minister-designate Saad Hariri stepped down, unable to form a national unity government some 2¼ months after his election in June. After his moderate and relatively pro-Western party won the largest number of seats in the Lebanese parliament, Mr. Hariri proposed the formation of a broad based government that would even award a share of the cabinet posts to Hezbollah.

Yet Hezbollah has been intent on thwarting these efforts to form a cabinet.

Despite the fact that the Lebanese constitution confers on the President and Prime Minister the power to make cabinet appointments, and irrespective of Mr. Hariri's repeated attempts to form a government, talks have broken down over the demand by a Hezbollah-allied party that it retain the Telecommunications Ministry. This may appear to be a small and insignificant point of contention, and surely not one that would prompt an incoming Prime Minister to abandon his post, until we consider that Hezbollah badly wants to retain control over telecommunications and surveillance in Lebanon.

Hezbollah, of course, not only possesses a surveillance capacity and an independent communications and broadcasting system, but also retains vast weaponry befitting its status as an independent militia. Along with its Syrian and Iranian sponsors, Hezbollah continues to both exert influence outside the constitutional process and in-

vite foreign meddling in Lebanese affairs.

I believe that the United States should take a strong stand in favor of respecting the outcome of the June democratic elections, and urge the parties in Lebanon to form a government in a manner that respects the constitutional process. Over the longer term, it is abundantly clear that there can be no durable peace in Lebanon, nor any long-term stability in the political process there, so long as Hezbollah continues to act freely as an armed, independent militia. According to some reports, Hezbollah remains today the best armed force in the country, better armed, indeed, than even the Lebanese Armed Forces. Such a situation invites further fighting at some point between Hezbollah and Israel and suggests that Hezbollah will continue to use its military power to induce cooperation with its demands at home. Sooner or later, one way or another, and as the U.N. Security Council has demanded, Hezbollah must be disarmed.

We should also make perfectly clear to Syria that better ties with the United States will require an end to its malign interference in its neighbor's affairs. The administration has made a major effort this year to reach out Syria, sending a number of delegations to Damascus and making clear that better ties with the U.S. are possible if Syria changes its ways. Yet we should recall that it has been just 4 years since Mr. Hariri emerged onto the political stage after his father, Rafik Hariri, was murdered in a bombing. Reports indicate that suicide bombers continue to cross the Syrian border into Iraq. And Syria maintains its hostility to Israel and its close ties to the government of Iran. We must be clear that there must be real change on these issues in order for Syria to enjoy significantly warmer relations with the United States.

Some Americans might reasonably ask why. Why should we care about the freedom and democratic aspirations of the Lebanese people? What matter is it of ours? Don't we have enough problems here at home, without spending our time and attention on the affairs of a small country far from our shores?

In answering this, I would return to the theme with which I set out these brief remarks. We have learned since the attacks of 9/11 that instability in such places is not often confined to its borders. In lands where repression and despair are rife, intolerance and extremism grows in the hearts of some, and violence in the minds of a few. In Lebanon, as in so many other places around the world, the population aspires to something better than to be pulled from side to side by a thuggish and cruel militia. The vast majority of the Lebanese people want only that which we here in America desire, the freedom and security to build, through their talents and industry, a better life for themselves and their children. As Americans, we must demonstrate that

we stand beside them in this hope. As we commemorate today the terrible acts of a small group dedicated to extinguishing this very ideal throughout the world, we should, I believe, rededicate ourselves and our policies to advancing this noble goal.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, are we in a period of morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes.

TRIBUTE TO THE LOGAN COUNTY LITTLE LEAGUERS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the remarkable accomplishments of the Logan County Little League All-Star team. While I remember fondly the years I played America's pastime in my youth, none of my experiences can compare to those of these 10 Little Leaguers as they competed in this year's Little League World Series.

Despite its small-town feel, Logan County has produced a number of notable individuals, from astronauts and governors to NBA players and Major League Baseball pitchers.

So it is not surprising that a community that has already produced such notable figures would rally behind a group of 11- and 12-year-old players who represented the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the Great Lakes Region in this year's Little League World Series. As the first team from Kentucky to reach this level of competition in 4 years, Logan County's All-Stars demonstrated their talent in the games leading up to their World Series bid.

When four players homered in the regional final in Indianapolis, the Logan County All-Star team set its sights on Williamsport, PA. Thankfully, their vision found support in the community. In order to afford the sizable cost of travel and lodging, the Little Leaguers and their supporters raised funds in all manner of ways, from selling steak sandwiches and auctioning off signed baseballs to holding a telethon at a local radio station.

The team played its first two games of the double elimination tournament against the West Region champions from Chula Vista, CA. While the Western team proved to be overpowering, Logan County's team demonstrated remarkable sportsmanship. As the proud winning-bidder of an auctioned T-shirt put it, "Their character is impeccable, and we know a lot of them . . . they behave themselves and they represent Logan County and Kentucky perfectly."

Regardless of what the scoreboard read, Logan County's All-Stars are

winners. Moreover, this experience stretches beyond moments played out between the chalk-marked lines of the field. These youngsters were able to meet and develop bonds with other players from countries all over the world. Several players described their trip with one word—"awesome."

It is with great honor that I place the names of this year's Logan County Little League All-Stars into the RECORD. Under the leadership of manager Kevin Gettings, team members Caleb Bruner, Joe Holliday, Zack Denney, Tucker Baldwin, Daniel Beaty, Desmon Quarles, Matt Harper, Barrett Croslin, Ian Woodall, and Jacob Wood made their hometown, their State, and this Senator very proud.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

COMMENDING THE NATIONAL EXTENSION ASSOCIATION FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

• Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to inform the Senate of the importance of the National Extension Association Family and Consumer Sciences, NEAFCS, and its network of associates on its 75th anniversary. This organization educates and recognizes Extension Service professionals who work to impact the quality of life for individuals, families, and communities. These educators provide practical, research-based education to help improve the quality of life for families and individuals.

Providing adults and youth with the necessary skills and knowledge to help them achieve the best quality of life possible is paramount to creating healthy families and a healthy American economy. The Cooperative Extension System, part of the land grant university system, is a nationwide educational network funded cooperatively by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, State governments, and county governments. Extension system initiatives in nutrition, healthy lifestyles, early brain development, food safety, financial management, and building strong families enable citizens to gain knowledge and skills to lead full and productive lives.

Cooperative Extension professionals and members of the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences have been offering educational workshops, seminars, publications, media outreach, and websites to help individuals and communities for 75 years. I commend the NEAFCS on their 75th anniversary as well as the local faculty and staff who provide education that is critical to the quality of life in many rural communities.

I also urge the President of the United States to issue a proclamation to commend this organization on its 75th anniversary. The American people should become more familiar with these services and take advantage of the educational opportunities that

Family and Consumer Sciences educators offer through the extension system.●

REMEMBERING RICHARD CRITTENDEN

• Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, today, we mourn the loss of Officer Richard Crittenden, a true hero who gave his life in the line of duty. My thoughts and prayers go out to his wife, his son and stepdaughter, his grandchildren, the North St. Paul Police Department and the entire community during this difficult time.

On Monday, September 7, 2009, Officer Crittenden was shot and killed while responding to a domestic disturbance. On that day, he made the ultimate sacrifice in order to protect a citizen in danger.

Officer Crittenden was a dedicated officer who served the North St. Paul Police Department for 9 years. He is fondly remembered by those in the community as a "great cop." I join my House colleague, U.S. Representative BETTY MCCOLLUM, in saying that we are forever grateful for his service and bravery.

As we mourn his loss, let us also pay tribute to all the law enforcement officers who risk their lives every day to protect our lives. As a former prosecutor, I gained an unending respect for all members of the law enforcement community. They serve on the frontlines every day to protect public safety and our communities. Let us never forget their service and their courage.●

RECOGNIZING TEX TECH INDUSTRIES

• Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, 8 years ago today, we witnessed the horrendous attacks of September 11, 2001. Since that time, we have been engaged in a global fight against terrorism, and our Nation's military men and women have defended our country admirably and bravely. As we rely on them for our Nation's protection, they, in turn, rely on hundreds of businesses nationwide to provide them with state-of-the-art safety products. Today, as we mark this painful anniversary, I rise to recognize a small Maine company that is working every day to keep our military personnel safe by producing intricate textiles used to make body armor.

Tex Tech Industries, headquartered in Portland with an additional facility in the town of Monmouth, has been manufacturing textiles since 1902. Several years ago, Tex Tech began transitioning itself from a traditional textile mill into a dynamic, cutting edge leader in its field, and the company presently makes over 7,000 different unique products involving textiles, in part due to its remarkable research and development capabilities.

Of note, Tex Tech is the world's largest producer of tennis felt, the green material used to cover tennis balls. It